

Employment Supports

I. Priorities – What to Keep

- A. Retain Ability to Provide Employment Services to People with Disabilities that Receive No Home and Community-Based Services
- B. Promoting Value of Employment
- C. Post-Secondary
- D. Increasing Independence at Job Site

II. Priorities – What to Explore

- A. Expand Knowledge Base of All Educators
- B. Youth Transition Supports
- C. Developmental Services (DS) shared benefits counselor
- D. Business Education – Spotlight Spot Light People who are Employed

III. Summary Sheets

- A. Expand Knowledge Base of All Educators
 - 1. Identify 2 trainers to provide training/development to all schools – including implicit bias training (tracking, unemployable, etc.).
 - 2. Education about Benefits to schools/families early in school years.
 - 3. Coordinate efforts with “Supported Decision-Making” initiative/principle.
 - 4. Change practices in school to provide more work exposure.
 - 5. Provide fact sheets with Supported Employment (SE) values, intent of services, what SE is not.
- B. Youth Transition Supports
 - 1. Employment Experiences (real) in School.
 - 2. Reconcile Post-Secondary Education (PSE) initiative with funding mechanism for PSE that is transparent.
 - 3. Start transition process much sooner (not senior year).
 - 4. Personnel needed to partner between schools and Designated Agencies (DA)/Supported Employment services.
 - 5. Contracts with schools to train para-professionals.
 - 6. Pre-services training for educators.
- C. Developmental Services (DS) shared benefits counselor
 - 1. Need it at an earlier age in school.
 - 2. Interdepartmental leaders look at possibilities.

3. On-line resource – easy format with calculator for families or YouTube clip. Don't forget "multiple benefits".
- D. Business Education – Spotlight Spot Light People who are Employed
 1. Involve Business Networks
 2. Join Chamber of Commerce
 3. Creative Workforce Solutions (CWS)
 4. Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR)
 5. Localize/Regionalize
 6. Self-employment
 7. Realize businesses that employ – via what?.....
 8. Highlight people in career advancements
 9. Database of employers
 10. Increase idea of inclusion – universally
 11. Our discretion of business truly socially responsible

IV. Work Sheets¹

- A. **What is working / needs to be preserved?** [red dots]
 1. Job carving [2]
 2. Personal-centered model [7]
 3. Employer partnerships in Vermont [2]
 4. Individual Support Agreement [1]
 5. Team meetings [1]
 6. Work experiences
 7. Increasing independence [8]
 8. Youth transition supports +1 [2]
 9. Job site retention supports/responsive customer services [1]
 10. Support structure regardless of funding [7]
 11. Self-employment
 12. Post-secondary [7]
 13. Agency collaboration [3]
 14. Existing education opportunities
 15. Inclusivity [1]
 16. Employment program leadership [3]
 17. #1 – closing sheltered workshops

¹ The "+ number" indicate the number of times a concept was mentioned if more than once. The "[numbers in brackets]" indicate the number of dots (either red or green) used to prioritize the concepts.

18. Fair compensation
19. Promoting values of employment [8]

B. What are the challenges?

1. Erosion of disability rights – diminishes people with disabilities
2. Supported Employment managers more time in administration functions
3. Transportation
4. No Supported Employment funding for over age 26
5. Fair compensation for supported employees and staff
6. Too worried about tracking data – too much time – VRPPWK – no good database
7. Funding decreases – deficits in infrastructure/personnel – lack of case management that is proactive
8. Cases of discrimination
9. Lack of knowledge about benefits counseling – opportunities vs. can't work
10. Reduced access to Vocational Rehabilitation Benefits Counselors (less staff)
11. Real need for employment but long waits or no service
12. Supported Employment staff turnover – livable wage +2
13. More need for bargaining for staff salary
14. Need more tech training and better Career Path jobs
15. Not enough work hours for many – Cap on Supported Employment/Community Supports and not enough staff hours to support more hours (i.e., over 25 hours) +2
16. Supported Employment staff not able to work variety of schedule
17. Disconnect between school values and Developmental Disabilities Services work values (they found low-quality jobs)
18. Lack of choice based on real career exploration
19. Limited job hours does not support learning soft skill practice
20. Union shops limit placement potential
21. No utilization of payment – decreasing flexibility with consumer
22. Less inventories – emphasis on employment
23. More informed supervision
24. Are there ways to use payment reform flexibility

C. What do we need to explore / learn about? [green dots]

1. Explore supporting folks who don't meet priority but are very close to employment independence
2. Cost of living adjustment needed [2]

3. Market financial values to college programs
4. Youth transition supports – school efforts prior to graduation [5]
5. Expand knowledge base of all educators [7]
6. Funding source and support/eligibility [1]
7. More people with disabilities working in agencies [1]
8. Developmental disabilities shared benefits counselor [7]
9. Partnerships with businesses [1]
10. Utilizing different employment resources and social media [1]
11. Financial literacy [3]
12. Family employment awareness training [2]
13. How to increase job developers in every program in the next few years
14. Business education [7]
15. Spotlight people that are employed
16. Clearly identify employer needs in Vermont
17. Funding priority – post-secondary [3]
18. Transportation initiatives [3]
19. Supporting businesses that employ individuals with disabilities [2]
20. Implicit bias training [4]
21. More open to creative ideas free from previous history concerns
(congregate settings, inclusion vs. special treatment) [2]
22. Researching exemptions with union about placements